

Greater Nashua Public Health Network, Quarterly Update

(February, 2015- April, 2015)
April 2015 - Issue 7



This newsletter is a publication of the Greater Nashua Public Health Network. There are five programs that serve this area that will be highlighted each quarter, including, the Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC), Emergency Preparedness (EP), Substance Misuse Prevention (SMP), the Community Health Improvement Program (CHIP) and Healthy Homes.

Summer in the Greater Nashua Region

Warmer temperatures are finally here! This can only mean one thing; school vacation is around the corner. As school aged children jump for joy, many parents worry about what their children will do over the summer when parents are working. There are lots of programs and resources in Nashua and throughout the region, and we wanted to highlight just a few.

The City of Nashua will be running a [Summer Recreation Bus Route](#) service open to the public. This summer program will connect residents of all ages to some of Nashua's most popular recreation and activity sites. Running 6/22 through 8/25, this bus service will make stops at selected sites in a continuous loop from 9am to 6pm, Monday through Friday.

This service will be free for all school-aged children (6-18 years old) that register.

The City of Nashua also has a full "Summer Fun" series that includes many free festivals, movie options, and other fun activities that are planned with kids and young families in mind - the schedule is usually available in May on the [City of Nashua website](#).

Throughout the Greater Nashua Region there are many opportunities for kids to be involved in positive activities.

- The YMCA in Merrimack has many programs and camps available just click [HERE](#) for more information.

- The Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club has many [summer activities and camps](#) that kids participate in.

Regardless of which town you may live in, you can contact your local Parks and Recreation Department to get information about what local sports or activities are available for your child to participate in. Another great resource are the local faith communities, which often offer summer events geared for children.

We hope you will share these fun summer resources with your community and networks. Community engagement, in addition to parental involvement, family support and positive adult relationships are important in healthy development. Have a healthy and safe summer!



Emergency Preparedness

Preparing for the Next Public Health Emergency

No one can predict the next public health emergency; therefore, we have to be prepared to respond to an event in our community at a moment's notice. If the response includes providing medication to residents, we will activate Points of Dispensing (PODs) within the region where the general public can come to receive medications. Most PODs would be located at schools. For certain events, these PODs may need to be able to provide medication or vaccine to the entire population of our region – around 206,000 people – within 48 hours. To help meet this 48-hour timeframe, reduce wait times and relieve some of the

people. By partnering with local businesses, universities, community organizations, and medical facilities, we can decrease the number of people going to the same places for medicine during a public health emergency. Closed PODs help to reach specific portions of the community more quickly.

By partnering with public health and operating a Closed POD, your employees/members/faculty and their family members will receive medications at your facility which reduces the likelihood of having to visit the open PODs.

Operating a Closed POD will ultimately help organizations with



return to normal duties within the organization more quickly.

The Nashua Division of Public Health and Community Services is available to work closely with your organization to ensure that you have the needed information and resources to establish a Closed POD. As with all preparedness activities, the more we communicate and exercise our response plans now, the better we will respond if an emergency occurs

If you are interested in having your organization become a Closed POD, or would like to get more information, contact Patty Crooker at CrookerP@NashuaNH.gov.

Closed POD Benefits

Benefits our community

- *Helps achieve the community dispensing goal more rapidly*
- *Decreases the number of people going to common dispensing sites*

Benefits your organization

- *Protects your organization and your families*
- *Helps to ensure your organization's continuity of operations*

burden placed on dispensing sites, public health officials across the nation are working with various organizations within their communities and establishing partnerships to develop innovative alternate dispensing options to enhance the dispensing capability. One method is through Closed Points of Dispensing (Closed PODs).

A Closed POD is a private location where medications are dispensed to a specific group of

their Continuity of Operations plans by aiding them in becoming more resilient during and after an emergency and enabling them to

Our Role

- *Pre-event planning and technical assistance*
- *Training and education*
- *Providing medications during an emergency*
- *Assisting with closed POD activation, operation and recovery activities*

Your Role

- *Developing a closed POD plan*
- *Participating in trainings and exercises*
- *Maintaining the necessary supplies and equipment needed to operate a closed POD*
- *Dispensing medications following guidance provided by the Nashua Division of Public Health and Community Services.*

Substance Misuse and Prevention:

Community's Role in Substance Misuse Prevention

New Hampshire, like many other States in the Northeast, has been witness to a sharp increase in heroin use in the past few years. According to the latest statistics, New Hampshire recorded 321 drug-related deaths in 2014. These numbers are troubling and have the public's attention, but many people are wondering, "What can I do about this problem?" Community members may feel at a loss when they hear about a

drug-related death in their community or have a family member, neighbor or friend with a substance use disorder. Community members can make a big difference in their communities by creating an environment where people feel safe enough to ask for help. Community members can also educate youth about the negative consequences of Substance Use Disorder.

According to the 2014 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 62.7% of high school students in the Greater Nashua Region think that they are at great risk if they take a prescription drug without a prescription. This means that almost 40% of students don't see great harm in taking a prescription drug without a prescription. To make a difference in your community, begin by [talking to your children](#)

about the negative consequences of drugs. Talk to your neighbors about the negative consequences of drugs. Lock up your prescription medications so that only the person to whom it is prescribed may have access to the drug. Educate yourself about how to talk to your children about drugs and alcohol. Join a community coalition that works to reduce substance misuse in your community (there are five local coalitions in the Greater Nashua Region). Learn where people can go for treatment and learn how to expand on recovery supports in your community.

No one sets out to become addicted to drugs, but with more education and community support we can make a difference in NH.

"No one sets out to become addicted to drugs, but with more education and community support we can make a difference in NH"

Prevention needs to start in our communities and we need you to be part of it. Treatment works, recovery is possible! But community support is required to make it all happen. To learn what events are happening in your community that support prevention, treatment and recovery and how you can get involved, follow [Beyond Influence](#) on Facebook and on Twitter @BeyondNashua.

Join a community coalition that works to reduce substance misuse in your community!

Training and Presentations

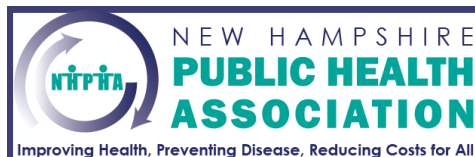
The Division of Public Health and Community Services have the ability to provide trainings, presentations, and webinars. Trainings can be conducted at the Division of Public Health and Community Services, at your organization, conference, or online. Our trainings and presentations can be adaptable to most audiences and if you don't see a training that fits your needs, we are happy to work with you.

To schedule a presentation or for more information, contact:

Melissa Schoemmell at
schoemmellm@nashuanh.gov,
 603.589.4543

For a full listing of our trainings visit:

<http://bit.ly/DPHCSTrainings>



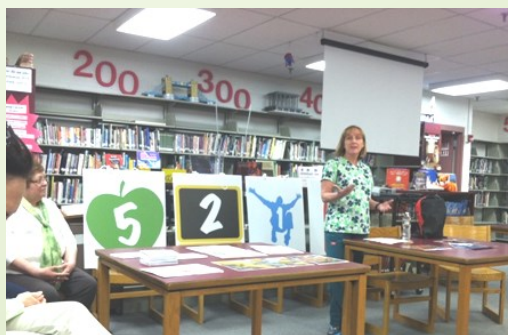
The New Hampshire Public Health Association (NHPHA) supports science based public health policy and has a goal of informing citizenry of changes needed in the laws and government in order to improve public health. They track bills and attend hearings on public health issues. To check the status of NHPHA's position on current NH bills or to subscribe to the "Health in All Policies" E-News, check out their website:

<http://nhpha.org/advocacy/current-activities/bill-tracking>

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Obesity Prevention Workgroup

Members of this workgroup are also part of the School District's Wellness Committee. Last month, the Wellness Committee presented to staff and parents at Pennichuck Junior High School to share new ideas about ways to include healthy foods in school activities. The Obesity Workgroup promotes positive messaging such as the **5-2-1-0** program's suggestion for daily living that includes **five** fruits or vegetables, **two** hours or less of screen time, **one** hour or more of physical activity, and **zero** sugary drinks. The workgroup also participated



in the Children's Health event at Dr. Crisp School by providing hands-on activities that included planting green bean seeds and a card matching game to identify the "Go" "Slow" and "Whoa" foods that are part of a typical diet. The workgroup supports the many healthy eating and active living opportunities available in the

region. Among these, local farmers markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms provide community members with a range of local produce and products. In Nashua, Great American Downtown has announced plans to grow the numbers and diversity of products available at the Main Street Farmer's Market that will open for the season on 6/21/15. Applications for local farmers, crafters, artists, and downtown businesses are available at: www.downtownNashua.org. Find out more about farmers markets and CSA's throughout the state here: <http://bit.ly/NHfarmersmarkets>

The Mental Health Workgroup

goes to the Pheasant Lane Mall! The workgroup brought together 14 area organizations whose work includes support, services, education, advocacy, referral and treatment for behavioral health issues of substance misuse, suicide, emotional wellness and mental illness. The workgroup asked the organizations to participate in an

experiential fair at the Pheasant Lane Mall in order to raise awareness, understanding, and knowledge of behavioral health. Attendees engaged in demonstra-



tions and activities such as watching video clips, participating in simulation activities and discussing typical feelings and reactions after traumatic events. Several of the displays promoted positive behaviors to support overall wellness by offering free meditation CDs and stress ball giveaways, pressure-free walking tips and mini massages.

Learning the Basics

Communicating with Healthcare Professionals

Understanding Insurance, Appointments and Billing

Staying Healthy

The Access to Health Care Workgroup has completed the Patient Self Advocacy video series, "My Health. My Care." and they are now promoting it widely throughout the public health region.

Input from viewers who attended screenings in Milford, Nashua, and Merrimack indicate the information is easy to understand and useful to anyone who wants to learn about the healthcare system and how to get the most out of their healthcare experiences.

These videos can be viewed here: (<http://bit.ly/NPHYoutube>).

A toolkit that includes the four video segments, template promotional fliers, evaluations and suggested scripting for running a screening is available here: <http://bit.ly/MyHealthMyCare>.

Public Health Annual Meeting

Are you interested in being part of the exciting work that is improving health in the greater Nashua region?

On Thursday, May 28, 2015, health partners, community members, and other local stakeholders with an interest in improving the overall health of the region will be considering what evidence based

or best practice strategies should be implemented over the next three years.

You are invited to be part of the process by participating in the May 28th Public Health Advisory Council Annual Meeting.

Register here!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GNPHAC_Annual2015



Greater Nashua • Greater Health

While most Nashua residents are connected to city water, many residents in the surrounding towns rely on private wells.

According to the Department of Environmental Services (NH DES), one in five private wells here in New Hampshire are expected to exceed the health-based standard for arsenic which affects over 100,000 people. Spring is the perfect time to test your well as



the melting snow is creating a rise in the water table.

NH DES promotes private well testing for NH residents using private wells in order to limit exposure to arsenic, radon and other harmful contaminants. The state offers materials, technical assistance and assistance with organizing community forums on private well testing and treatment.

To learn more or if you are interested in hosting one of these forums, click [HERE](#).

Healthy Homes



Falls Prevention Program

In New Hampshire, falls are the leading cause of both fatal and non-fatal injuries for older adults and a leading cause of 911 calls. It is estimated that every 15 seconds, an adult age 65 and older is treated in a New Hampshire hospital emergency room for a fall-related injury. Falls are preventable and the risk of falling can be reduced through education and physical activity.

To prevent falls among older adults, the NH Community Falls Prevention Program is working state-wide to increase the public's and health provider's awareness about falls and falls prevention. As a part of this state-wide program the [Center for Physical Therapy and Exercise](#), [Southern NH Medical Center](#), and the [YMCA of Greater Nashua](#) are working together to reduce falls in Greater Nashua.

One initiative being introduced through this work is "*A Matter of Balance*", an award winning evidence-based program designed to reduce the fear of falling and increase the activity levels of older adults who have concerns about falling. In addition to "*A Matter of Balance*", is the research-based balance training regimen known as "*Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance*" program. This program is designed for older adults and people with balance disorders. Based upon traditional Tai Ji, therapeutic movements are integrated and allow people with different capabilities to participate.

If you are interested in learning more about these programs or would like to get involved, contact Rebecca Sky, Director of the Foundation for Healthy Communities (RSky@healthyNH.com)



Upcoming Events

May

5/1-5/31: Hepatitis Awareness Month! Click [HERE](#) for all the testing locations.

5/17-5/23: National Prevention Week, learn how you can get involved [HERE](#).

5/19, 3-7pm: Health Outreach Event at [SHARE Inc.](#) in Milford

5/20, 5:30-7:30pm: HPV Vaccine Discussion at Rivier University's Dion Center.

Link to register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HPVTalk2015>

5/28, 8:30am-3pm: Greater Nashua Public Health Advisory Council Annual Meeting.

Link to register: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GNPHAC_Annual2015

5/29, 12-1pm: Ticks and Lyme disease Talk at the Merrimack Town Hall

5/30, 9:30-11:30am: Immunizations at the Pelham Library

June

6/5, 12-1 pm: Mosquito Borne Illnesses Presentation at the Merrimack Town Hall

6/16, 3-7 pm: Health Outreach Event at [SHARE Inc.](#) in Milford

6/27: National HIV Testing Day. Various testing [locations](#).

6/22-8/25, Monday-Friday, 9am-6pm: [Summer Recreation Bus Route](#)

July

7/21, 3-7 pm: Health Outreach Event at [SHARE Inc.](#) in Milford

Contact Melissa Schoemmell at schoemmellm@nashuanh.gov for more information on these upcoming events or to promote your upcoming health and safety events here!

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